HUMORISTS OF THE POOLROOM

OPERATORS WHO HAD FUN AS THEY CALLED OFF RACES.

"Sausage Wins" the Announcement of Bologna's Victory—Description of Negligence's Defeat—The Many Transformations of the Horse Philanthropist.

"The biggest roar of joy that I ever heard in a poolroom shook the spider webs from the rafters of a room that I visited in Covington the other day," said a turfman just back from a trip to the Kentucky breeding farms. "It was the largest of all those huge Covington rooms, and a plant where the top limit is higher than the fish-scale clouds.

"There were fifteen hundred men in the room on the day I visited it, and all of them were for Bologna. Bologna is a smudge of a St. Florian colt that's running out in California.

"A few days before Bologna had shown his people something at the Oakland track, over the drink from San Francisco, that caused them to bet on him in a four and a half furlong race. They had backed him from thirties to about nothing, and he had connected, beating a very moderate bunch in pretty nigh as quick time as the distance was ever made in on the Coast.

"That didn't prove anything, of course. But Bologna's people shooed him onto a car and had him toted down the road to Los Angeles, with the idea that they might repeat with him at Ascot.

"They skidded Bologna into a five furlong race at Ascot the day after they reached Los Angeles with the colt, and it was on this day that I visited the Covington room. Every dope thumber in the room had his eye on Bologna's name.

"They knew that the little colt with the ornery name would be at a long price, entered as he was with sprinters like Belle Kinney, El Otros and that kind, and, having the chart of his neat performance a week before at San Francisco, and whimsically impressed, too, with the colt's name, as poolroom players often are, they were just waiting for the track price to go up against that one.

"Moreover, there was information in the room from various California horsemen on Bologna. Again, a number of the Cincinnati papers had picked Bologna to cop. And, in addition to all this, Bologna was the guaranteed special of several of the leading Chicago and Cincinnati tipsters. The poolroom manager had sardonically pasted the sheets containing the selections of these tipsters on a stanchion in the room, so that all hands could get a rubber at it.

"Bologna's price, track odds, went up, 20, 8 and 4, and the thousand and a half men in that Covington room fought like bull moose to get Bologna pasteboards. They were still buying Bologna when the race was off.

"The operator in that Covington room was one of those humorous race callers, the first of his kind that I've listened to for a number of years.

"'Why, shucks, there they go at Ascot!' he exclaimed through his megaphone as his key announced that they were off at the Los Angeles track. 'And, upon me waird, and a couple of fury-furies, Bologna has front end, Belle Kinney is near him, and Blue Coat trails!'

"The clamor of the crowd had ceased and the quiet all through the vast room was so intense that the clicking of the key sounded like the drumming of a riveter's hammer on a hot-air zinc furnace.

"'Oh, sugar,' said the humorous operator, when the key announced the next position of the horses, 'that frankfurter is at the quarter by one open length, the Belle being a similar distance beyond Blue Coat; wou'd you believe it, mercy!' and still the crowd gazed open mouthed without a word.

"'In the stretch,' sung out the funny operator, 'the wienerwurst, two lengths to the goodsky, is about ready to crack, where Belle Kinney is ready to take him, she being a length in front of El Otros.'

"Then the fingers began to snap, rootfully, all over the room. A man away in the rear of the room gave an imitation of the yelping of a dog in a mix-up, thus symbolically expressing his hopes for Bologna.

"'Close finish,' said the operator, and those fifteen hundred men were panting like cayuses that have been running away from a prairie fire.

"The operator suddenly jumped to his feet from his platform chair, screwed his megaphone tightly to his mouth, and then, with a bawl that actually seemed to send a breeze under your hat like the detonation of a huge gun, he let it out:

"'Sausage wins!'

"Well, I've heard a lot of the we-win thing in poolrooms in my day, but I never heard such a suddenly loosened barbaric yawp of frenzied gloatfulness as those fifteen hundred men shot out of themselves when that funny telegrapher thus announced the triumph of Bologna.

"That, as I say, was the first time I'd heard one of the kidding operators call off a race for a number of years, and it took me back to the old years when the poolroom business was less deadly in its earnestness than it is nowadays, and when a lot of the room operators had a way of letting the players up and down by their way of announcing the positions of the horses.

"There was an operator in a big room in Sausalito, down the bay from San Francisco, who used to keep a lot of the new players puzzled until they got used to his call-off game.

"I was in that room one day when there was a big tip around on the hurdler Negligence. It seemed as if all the players in San Francisco had got that one from St. Louis friends—Negligence was to go at St. Louis—and when the old rattletybang steamboat Tiburon went over from San Francisco to Sausalito at half past 10 in the morning she was stuffed to the stack of her with wise ones who had got the Negligence thing for a can't-lose moral.

"They all took the house betting offered against Negligence, which was 3 to 1, and when the horse's price came in from the track, at 3 to 5, they felt that they had the proprietor asleep at the switch and lashed to the mast.

"'There they sneak at old St. Loo!' sung out the operator, while all of the Negligence players huddled in close rooting groups, and a deep hush fell upon the room. 'Negligence is the first away, spinning, with the piece of fromage de brie Titus second, the lumberjack Tonto third, and the others close up.'

"'Well, we're on our way, all right,' muttered the Negligence folks, happily.

"'Negligence glides over the first stick by six times the length of his pairson, the Edam thing Titus being there with the plotz by a length, and Tonto a-scuddin' like a Studebaker in an offshore breeze,' was the operator's next call, and the Negligence people hustled over to get into line at the pay-off windows.

"They were smiling greasily at each other, and remarking to each other that it was a sin and a scandal to accept the kale.

"'That gay gee-gee Negligence skims over the next bunch of pickets by fifteen lengths, with the laboring galleon Tonto as far as you could hit a hen in front of the curled up Titus,' was the operator's next announcement.

"'Why, it's just like swiping a piece of sheet music off a piano, ain't it?' bawled a sawed off man who had slapped $300 on Negligence at the house betting 3 to 1, and all of the rest of the Negligence bunch cordially agreed with him.

"'Negligence,' said the operator then, with a tantalizing grin, 'quite neglected to take the final jump, preferring the level path for his'n, but his jock went over the hedge by himself and is now being picked up tenderly. The hod carrier Tonto pulls it down by forty lengths, with Titus taking his time for the second end, and the third not yet heard from.'

"The Negligence push voted that the operator had a danged fresh way of putting it, and streeled down to the old Tiburon enwrapped in gloom that couldn't be broken with a pick.

"There was a noted kidder working in a Louisville room a few years ago who had a way of shooting so far over the heads of his auditors that few of them could get next to the fun of his announcements.

"I was in Louisville one day when I got a wire from the owner of the horse Philanthropist telling me to go to it with the bath rug and whatever I could get on the mantelpiece vawzes. Philanthropist was entered in a Chicago race in which were some shifty platers, and the owner told me in his wire that there'd be a price.

"I had heard, a bit before that, that Philanthropist had been working like a Hindu after a long rest, and so I went to the Louisville room to take a peek at the prices when they got in and think it over.

"Philanthropist was sent to the Louisville room at 60 to 1, and I got down $50 straight at that figure. I had no sooner grabbed my ticket than the horse was flashed down to 30 to 1, and then the crowd in the room, seeing that maybe something was doing on that one, began to take it in lumps.

"By post time Philanthropist was an 8 to 1 shot, and the Louisville room wasn't taking much of that in good sized lots—only the chicken feed—for the plant already stood to lose $30,000 if the Philanthropist thing should connect.

"I had been so hypnotized by the price I saw against Philanthropist that I hadn't even looked at any of the other entries in the race, and I hadn't been very anxious to consider the chances of the other horses, anyhow, for fear that I might argue myself out of making a bet on my Chicago friend's good thing. So, when the race was off, I hardly knew the name of a horse in the race that Philanthropist was pitted against.

"'They've flew the coop at Washington Park,' droned the kidding operator in the Louisville room. 'George W. Childs is the busy one to show first away, with Totem clomping along, and Firelight the next.'

"Well, that didn't make me nervous any to speak of, although I'd like to have had my horse get off on the right foot, seeing that it was only a six furlong sprint.

"'The amiable Andy Carnegie arrives at the quarter, buck jumping, mouth open, ears pricked, and tail a-swishing, by six lengths of open daylight, with Firelight in trouble a length in front of the you-lose Totem.'

"'Now, there's one that I never heard of—Andy Carnegie,' said I to myself, beginning to get some worried. 'I wonder where he's been tending bar that he's got away from me, and now he's six lengths to the good. That horse George W. Childs must be a rank Texas quarter-mutt to've chucked it so suddenly after getting off in front. This Philanthropist mule of mine wants to hunch to the fore some or that boy on the Andy Carnegie terrier will be able to drop off and peddle matches and still cop.'

"'Peter Cooper at the half by five lengths, and under double reefs in a typhoon of his own making, Firelight doing the best she can four lengths to the fore of the proppy Totem!' droned the operator, and then I pulled my $3,000 to $50 ticket out of my pocket and looked at it with gloom.

"I would have sold it then for two bits' worth of beer checks or a last year's straw hat. I had never heard of the Peter Cooper horse either, but I hadn't been following 'em closely as they were running at Chicago, and I reflected that I had overlooked that one, too, as I had the Carnegie plug.

"I was pretty thick, I'll own, in not dropping to that Louisville operator's gag, but I wasn't familiar with his way of doing it then, as I became later, and so he had me going.

"'Peter Cooper wins, e-e-easy, by fifteen lengths, pulled double, and with his head in the boy's lap!' barked the operator, and right then I began to frame up the letter that I was going to write that night to the owner of Philanthropist for handing me a wire tip on a steam roller that had never got a whistle at any stage of the route.

"I was nudging along toward the door when I got a wallop on the back, and when I wheeled there was the proprietor of the room looking me over.

"'I guess maybe you wise dubs didn't hand me a jolt in that one,' the proprietor was saying to me.

"I thought he was handing me the gloat for the falling down of the good thing, and I consigned him to some insalubrious place as I continued my stroll toward the door.

"'Hey, ain't you going to wait to cash, pal?' he called after me, and then I turned around and said a number of other calorific things.

"He looked at me with genuine amazement then, and then the thing dawned on him and he began to grin. He permitted me to shoot off my string, and then he strung in with:

"'I've got a swell notion to take a welching chance with you. You're one of the dead wise conks, ain't you? Say, what kind of a citizen was Peter Cooper of New York when he was alive?'

"Oh! I tumbled then, like a bag of cement. The funny operator had crabbed Philanthropist's all-the-way lead in the race so far as I was concerned. First, the operator had made it George W. Childs, and then Andy Carnegie, and then Peter Cooper, and I had been too opaque to fall to it that it had been Philanthropist out in front all the way, and breezing.

"The other fellows in the room who had got the Philanthropist thing, who knew the operator, had been next all the time, which explained why they gave such a tremendous howl of happiness when Peter Cooper, a horse I had never heard of because he didn't exist, was announced as the winner."

Ridding Wisconsin Lake of German Carp.

From the Milwaukee Sentinel.

"The man who introduced the German carp to the smaller lakes of Wisconsin was guilty of a sin much worse than he realized," said A. J. Proctor of Beaver Dam. "These fish have overrun the streams until the smaller species have been killed off. Many of the lakes that formerly were well supplied with marketable fish now contain only the German carp.

"Take Beaver Dam Lake, for example," he continued. "Five years ago it was well stocked with bullheads, perch and catfish. During the winters a veritable village of shanties would spring up all over the lake where fishermen speared fish through the ice or caught them with nets. The last big season was in 1898, when from five to ten barrels of cleaned fish were shipped from the city daily. This naturally depleted the stock, and German carp raised havoc the ensuing spring during the spawning season. Now carp are the only fish to be found there.

This year efforts have been made to clear the lake of carp and restock it. All summer and fall the lake has been dragged from end to end. This was accomplished by means of two heavy scows, between which a net was strung, which were towed from end to end of the lake by steamers. It is believed that all of the carp have been eliminated. Next summer the lake will be restocked."

LOST IN A TEXAS PASTURE.

FOR 3 DAYS A WESTERN HUNTER WALKED ABOUT IN A CIRCLE.

Couldn't Get Away From One Spot—He Followed a Buck's Tracks Finally to a Wire Fence, and the Wire Took Him to a Ranch—Half Starved in His Wanderings.

PEARSALL, Tex., Dec. 31.—Thomas Hetburn came down here several days ago from Kansas City, Mo., to go deer hunting on the Crawford ranch. He was accompanied by two friends from San Antonio.

There are about 50,000 acres in the pasture where Mr. Hetburn and his companions pitched their camp. The land is almost level and is covered with a thick growth of mesquite and prickly pear. There are no trees of any size from which one can get his bearings, and all old hunters in the region, no matter how long they have been in the country, never fail to carry a compass or take other precautions which will insure them from getting lost while travelling through these big pastures.

Mr. Hetburn thought it would be easy to find his way back to camp, and started out hunting the morning after his arrival at the camping place. He walked till he became hungry, and a look at his watch told him it was time for dinner. Then he began to retrace his steps and walked in what he supposed was the direction of the camp.

After walking for about an hour a familiar bush attracted his attention. Even then the thought did not occur to him that he was lost. He walked on further and noticed the imprints of his shoes in a soft place in the ground. He then realized that he had been travelling in a circle.

The very thought that he was lost seemed to crush all reason out of his mind. He walked on and on in a frantic effort to go in what he took to be the direction of his camp. He invariably continued in a circle, and familiar bushes passed and repassed before his vision.

Near dusk he became exhausted and lay down under a mesquite tree. There he slept all night, despite the howling of the coyotes around him and the dangers of an attack from the wild hogs which roam in droves over the pasture.

Early next morning he fired his gun several times, in the hope that it would be heard by his friends in camp and bring them to him, but the day wore on and no relief came. He fired his gun at intervals until his ammunition was exhausted.

Again and again he started off to get away from the spot, but each time his feet led him back to the very tree where he had passed the night. Hunger and thirst were becoming almost unbearable. He alleviated his suffering somewhat by sucking the pulp of the prickly pear leaves.

Another day passed, and relief seemed to be no nearer than at first. He passed a restless night under the tree. Toward morning a heavy shower of rain soaked him to his skin. It chilled him through, and in his desperation he started off in the darkness to try again to find the camp. He soon found himself back to the same mesquite tree under the branches of which he had passed the preceding two nights, but the walk started his blood circulating again and he lay down and slept till morning.

In the forenoon of the second day a drove of wild hogs, led by a ferocious looking boar, passed through the bushes a short distance away. He could see them plainly, and for a long time he remained perfectly quiet, hardly daring to move a muscle for fear that the animals would find him out and attack him. He dug some roots and ate them and partly quenched his thirst by partaking freely of the juice of the prickly pear leaves.

He had about given up hope of being discovered when, just after noon of the third day, a big antlered buck strode into the little opening within a few yards of where he was dejectedly sitting under the tree. The wind carried the scent the other way, and the buck had no idea that a human being was anywhere around. He raised his head and surveyed the little cleared spot.

The eyes of the animal finally rested on Mr. Hetburn, but he did not run. Mr. Hetburn says it was the prettiest chance for a shot he ever experienced, but he was out of ammunition and his gun was useless.

The buck stood looking at him until he made an involuntary motion with his hand. Then the animal was off through the bushes like a flash. The thought came to his mind that he could follow the tracks of the buck in the soft earth, and that they might lead him away from the spot to which he had seemed to be closely bound for so long.

He acted quickly on the suggestion and found that the tracks of the buck were to be easily seen. He followed them for nearly three hours, until the wire line fence of the pasture came into view. He left the deer tracks then and followed the fence.

Late in the evening he brought up at the shack of a Mexican cow puncher. He was completely exhausted. His half-famished condition was relieved and after a night of good sleep at the shack he was escorted by the Mexican to the camp of his friends, more than ten miles away. His two companions had been searching for him constantly for two days and nights.

Mr. Hetburn said he had had enough of hunting in the big cattle pastures of southwest Texas. He was brought into Pearsall by his two friends, put on the train and started for home.

STORIES OF ANIMAL LIFE.

Mike Murphy's Wise Dog.

From the Nebraska State Journal.

L. C. Ren, city marshal at David City, has written to Capt. O'Kane of the Lincoln police force, telling him about a sagacious dog formerly living in that town. Mr. Ren's letter was prompted by the case of a lost dog which went to the police station for protection. He says:

"I see that a stray dog had reported to you and asked for protection, and it first struck me that it might be Mike Murphy's dog. At any rate it acted about as sagacious as he. Last fall I was making a raid on untagged dogs, and when this dog found out that I was trying to send him to the happy hunting grounds he made a bee line for the B. & M. depot, arriving there about the time the passenger for Lincoln came in, and although he had never boarded a train and none of the family was on he jumped on that train and has never been seen here since."

Courage of Wild Boar.

From Outing.

The wild boar never loses his head—or his heart; such courage I have never beheld in any four footed creature. He has all the cunning commonly accredited to the Devil, and in his rage is a demon that will charge anything of any size. I have seen a small boar work his way through a pack of dogs, and his smaller brother, the peccary, in Brazil, send a man up a tree and keep him there.

The boar looks ungainly, but the Indian species is as fleet as a horse for about three-quarters of a mile. He begins with flight, shifts to cunning and finally stands to the fight with magnificent courage, facing any odds. As, riding upon him, you are about to plant your spear he will dart—"jink," as they call it in India—to one side, repeating the performance several times, until he finds he cannot shake you, when, turning suddenly, with ears cocked and eyes glittering, he will charge furiously. If not squarely met with a well aimed and firmly held spear, he will upset both horse and rider. Hurling himself again and again against the surrounding spears, he will keep up his charge until killed, when he dies without a groan.

Catching Kingfish in Winter.

From the Los Angeles Times.

During the last few years there has been no phase of local fishing more to be depended upon than the annual winter run of these "imitation yellowfins," and rodsters have, therefore, come to regard them as an annual fixture, due to appear any time between the middle of December and New Year's. Last winter the first big catches were made about Christmas, when Harry Slotterbeck and other experts caught several hundred good-sized kingfish in San Pedro Bay, and this season, punctual as the clock, the run has returned.

Kingfish are not the most delicate of local marine products, nor are they worthy representatives of the croaker tribe as fighters when on the hook, but they have good points, and not the least of these is their almost incredible voracity, which often enables the veriest tyro to catch them three at a time.

Taken in winter, when their flesh is fairly firm, cleaned as soon as possible after removal from the water and carefully laid away out of the sun and wrapped in damp cloths, kingfish are not to be despised, and those who throw them away only show wasteful ignorance. Their popularity with sportsmen was attested last winter by the greatest concourse of rod and reel men that ever crowded the lumber wharves of San Pedro.

Together with the kingfish invariably come the pompano. These sweet and delicate little creatures are usually preceded from one to two weeks by their coarser companions, the kingfish, but the presence of either one in the sea coast bays is proof positive that the other variety is not far off at the time.

BRAVERY OF INDIAN WOMEN.

Instances in Which They Have Displayed Courage and Self-Sacrifice.

While the popular belief that the Indian wife is merely an unreckoned quantity in the affairs of her tribe and nation, a slave and drudge for her warrior husband, has some foundation, the rule has many exceptions, says the Los Angeles *Times*.

That the squaw should perform the most of the daily labor about the camp and wigwam, while the brave takes his ease, in order to be fresh and strong for the long hunting trip or the hardships of the warpath, seems in accord with the natural fitness of things in Indian philosophy; and the squaw performs her task willingly and without a murmur.

But let her lord and master assume too arbitrary a hand or heap too many indignities upon her, and there is immediately such a domestic war in the camp that he is not likely soon to forget it. Never will the writer forget an instance of this kind which he witnessed one night in the upper Columbia River country, about six years ago. He had pitched his tent near an Indian encampment, in plain view and within reasonable earshot of the redskin band, and along in the evening his attention was called to the fact that some unusual commotion was going on among his neighbors. The light of several campfires made everything plainly visible, and, sitting upon a convenient log in front of his tent, he observed a highly interesting and rather amusing spectacle.

One of the warriors had incurred the displeasure of his patient squaw and was manfully trying to bluff the matter out, with an overawing sternness and dignity commensurate with his personal greatness as a noted brave and the lord and master of his household.

But the more he tried to overawe her the fiercer and more defiant became the wrathful squaw, until, suddenly drawing a long, wicked looking knife, she leaped into the open space in front of the circle of wigwams, and throwing her blanket from her shoulders stamped it into the ground with spiteful impetuosity. Then, squaring herself like a Roman gladiator, she proceeded to hurl such a mighty and scathing tirade of abuse and defiance at the whole Indian camp that all withdrew to a respectful distance, not one venturing to speak or to make a movement while she had the floor.

For two hours she stood there, pouring forth her long pent up emotions in the light of the camp fires, her sinewy form and wrathful countenance making a weird picture of ferocity. For two hours, without a moment's intermission; and such a tremendous and scorching harangue from human lips the writer never expects to hear again.

Finally, she brought her pyrotechnic oratory to a lurid and wonderfully impressive climax; then, gathering up her spurned and bedraggled blanket, she strode to her wigwam with a tread comparable to that of an untamed lioness. Not another word was heard from Mr. Brave, and a modest respectful silence enveloped the whole Indian camp for the remainder of the night.

In point of personal bravery the squaw is often far from being the inferior of her lawful mate. The annals of the West are full of instances of her courage. Many times during the fierce Sioux wars, in the Black Hills region, detachments of warriors were saved from destruction by the bravery and stratagem of some of their squaws. One of these occasions was when a gentle eyed, pleasant faced maiden, Louie, afterward the wife of Sitting Bull, saved the great chief and a hundred of his braves from annihilation by running a fearful gauntlet of death and bringing help to the besieged warriors in the very teeth of a perfect hailstorm of bullets and arrows.

This dauntless spirit is seen to a very marked degree in the Indian women of all the Northwestern tribes, and particularly among the Ojibways of the Great Lakes. It seems that no situation is too appalling, no danger too great for them to face without hesitation and without flinching.

An instance in this connection also was witnessed by the writer, some fifteen years ago, at a blueberry camp a few miles north of Bear Lake, in Minnesota.

Several hundred Ojibway families were employed in picking the sweet berries, which grow in great abundance throughout the pine forests of this northern region, and which are crated and shipped in carloads to St. Paul and other city markets to the southward during the season of the fruit's ripening. As usually happens at such times, some one had managed to smuggle several bottles of whiskey into the redskins' possession, running the risk of the severe penalty prescribed by law for this offence for the sake of the few extra dollars which the thirsty sons of the forest are always willing to give for such liquid refreshment.

As a consequence a number of the bucks, who had felt the inspiring effects of a drink or two steal along their nerves and warm up dormant instincts of the wild, were kicking up quite a lively fuss among themselves, and knives were beginning to be flourished in rather sinister fashion, while blood was seen to flow from a number of ugly flesh wounds.

One quarrel led to another, and at length two stalwart specimens of Indian manhood, who had probably already had some grudge against each other in the past, uttered their wild warwhoops of defiance, sprang out into a little open space, and, drawing their knives, went at it in a regular duel to the death.

The next moment a tall old squaw, the mother of one of the combatants, came rushing through the circle of spectators, hurling them aside with her strong arms, and without an instant's hesitation, without a trace of fear upon her face, sprang squarely between the deadly knives! Alas, only to receive her death wound from the weapon of her own son as he aimed a wicked thrust at the body of his antagonist.

At another time, just below the little station of Moose Lake, on the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad, the writer witnessed a tragedy almost the parallel of this.

A deformed and hunchbacked Indian known as Joe Bug, an evil and desperate outlaw of that region, had committed a most unprovoked and cold blooded murder at the station, and was fleeing for his life toward the cover of timber a mile or so to the southward. The whole town had been aroused, and men were hot on his track from all directions.

A small party of Ojibways were camped beside the railroad, about half a mile below the station, and here the outlaw first showed himself after taking to the brush and willows which covered the intervening space. But, anticipating this very move, two of the pursuers had flanked the camp in the rear, and when the fugitive crossed the track and made for the timber just back of the tepees they sprang suddenly in front of him, blocking his pathway.

It chanced that neither of the men carried firearms of any kind, and Bug at once threw up his rifle to shoot them down. But no sooner had he raised the gun to his shoulder than one of the squaws at the camp, doubtless guessing the truth of the situation at a glance, sprang in front of the desperate outlaw and, grasping the muzzle of the rifle, attempted to wrest it from his hands.

That deed of unselfish bravery cost her her own life, and saved from death at least one of the men. Both men leaped forward to her aid, but were too late. With a curse of fierce hatred, the outlaw jerked savagely at the trigger, and the bullet pierced the heart of the brave woman.

He had no time for another shot, for the men were upon him. Leaping to one side, he eluded them like a snake and ran for the woods with the speed of a deer. A few moments afterward he disappeared in the forest, and was not seen again by white man or red for a period of several years.